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Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 17. Economic Commission for Europe

1. At its 19th meeting, on 30 May 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 17, Economic Commission for Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. A number of delegations emphasized the importance of the activities proposed under section 17 and supported the programme of work and the level of resources.

3. Some delegations stressed the importance of coordinating activities with other United Nations entities, and in particular with regional organizations, in order to avoid duplication of work.

4. Some delegations felt that there was a need for further streamlining of resources in non-priority areas and their redeployment to designated high priority areas. They also considered that the activities of some ECE bodies should be reviewed. Other delegations stressed the need to ensure adequate

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resources for all mandated activities of ECE, in particular for the development of cooperation in the field of industry and technology.

5. In this connection, other delegations regretted that the Secretary-General had proposed an activity at Vienna to support the reconstruction and development of the Central and Eastern European countries, without any legislative mandate. They emphasized that these functions could be developed under the activities of ECE. Some delegations regretted that the Secretariat had not given precise and sufficient information to Member States in order to enable them to identify the gains related to effectiveness and productivity that would arise from the transferring of these functions from Geneva to Vienna. Many delegations expressed support for the proposal under section 9, Department for Development Support and Management Services, to establish a Unit at Vienna to coordinate the activities related to the countries with economies in transition.

6. Many delegations emphasized the importance of further orientation and development of the activities of ECE for the purposes of the economic and social transformation in the countries with economies in transition.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 17, Economic Commission for Europe, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

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Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 18. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. At its 20th meeting, on 31 May 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 18, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Several delegations supported the programme of work and the proposed level of resources, while expressing concern at the decrease in the level of extrabudgetary resources. Some delegations were concerned about the limited resources assigned to some subprogrammes, in particular subprogramme 14, Regional integration and cooperation. Other delegations believed that ECLAC needed restructuring to ensure a more cost-effective and targeted work programme. More attention needed to be paid by the Commission to the changes in the economic environment of the region and to strengthening links with the private sector.

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3. Many delegations considered that increased resources should have been proposed for the programme. Other delegations argued that no additional resources or responsibilities should be devolved to ECLAC until it could demonstrate that it was making efficient and effective use of existing resources.

4. A number of delegations requested an explanation about the parameters used for the recosting, which appeared to be too high in comparison with the level of recosting in other regional commissions.

5. A number of delegations welcomed the efforts by the Secretary-General to reduce the rental cost for the premises of the office at Mexico City.

6. Several delegations stressed the need to ensure coordination of the ECLAC programme of work with other organizations within the United Nations system in order to avoid duplication.

7. Some delegations expressed concern regarding the timing of submission of ECLAC documentation in all the official languages of the Commission.

8. One delegation expressed concern at the inclusion of concepts such as governability, capacity for government, decentralization and local government (para. 18.28) without properly defining the role of government in this connection.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 18, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

10. The Committee also recommended that, when implementing paragraph 18.28, the Secretariat develop those activities upon request by interested Governments on the basis of the interests and national priorities of Member States.

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Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 19. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

1. At its 20th meeting, on 31 May 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 19, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Many delegations expressed their support for the programme activities and welcomed the new thematic approach adopted by ESCWA and the reorganization of its secretariat. Some delegations expressed the hope that the reorganization would lead to a more effective use of ESCWA resources, with greater attention being paid to priority activities.

3. Some delegations considered that subprogramme 2, Improvement of the quality of life, should be designated high priority and that ESCWA should avoid duplication of work with other organizations in the region.

4. Some delegations requested information about the timing and resource implications of the transfer of ESCWA headquarters to Beirut.

5. Some delegations asked whether the reorganization of the ESCWA secretariat had been completed. Other delegations welcomed the assurances by the Secretariat that the reorganization was in compliance with the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services contained in its report (A/49/891, annex.)

6. Some delegations rejected the inclusion in paragraph 19.14 of "(c) to regionalize human development concepts and indices" as an objective. They considered that those concepts and indices had no mandates, since General Assembly resolution 49/123 of 19 December 1994 stated clearly that the Human Development Report was not an official document of the United Nations.

Conclusions and recommendations

7. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that, when considering the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, it review the programme narrative of section 19, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

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Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 20. Regular programme of technical cooperation

1. At its 21st meeting, on 31 May 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 20, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. A number of delegations expressed their support for the proposals under this section. They stressed that the proposed activities and resources should be considered as complementary to the activities and resources under other related budget sections.

3. Some delegations noted the difficulty in identifying activities in the section and felt that more detailed information should be provided in that respect. In particular, they sought assurances that the bulk of the money spent under this programme would be devoted to the least developed and poorest countries. Other delegations recognized that the activities under this section were, by nature, difficult to programme.

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4. Some delegations underlined that activities related to technical cooperation should be financed by extrabudgetary resources. Other delegations considered that the activities under section 20 contributed to the development of developing countries and expressed their support for the financing of these activities through the regular budget in order to ensure that they are placed on a sound and assured financial basis.

5. Some delegations queried the relationship of the activities under this section with similar activities carried out by other United Nations programmes and sought assurance that there would be no overlapping or duplication of efforts in this regard. Some delegations advocated that this programme should be fundamentally reviewed and modified in order to respond more fully to the current requirements for technical cooperation. Other delegations stressed that this section was useful and provided the necessary flexibility to satisfy the emerging priorities of developing countries.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 20, Regular programme of technical cooperation, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

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Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 21. Human rights

1. At its 22nd and 23rd meetings, on 1 June 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 21, Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Many delegations supported the proposed programme of work and the proposed increases in resources. Many other delegations felt that the increase proposed was inadequate and more resources were needed in general in this important field and in order to reflect the expansion of activities following the World Conference on Human Rights. Many delegations regretted that priority areas in the economic and social sectors had not received similar proposals for increases, while recognizing the importance of the activities in the field of human rights, and expressed their concern at the increase in resources proposed for this sector. Other delegations expressed their concern that technical advisory assistance operations might not be adequately funded.

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3. A number of delegations questioned the legislative basis for the budget proposal as contained in section 21, since the revisions to programme 35 and section 21, of the revised budget estimates of the 1994-1995 programme budget had not been approved by the General Assembly. Other delegations pointed out that the legislative mandate for the budget proposal was derived from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Assembly.

4. Some delegations questioned the proposed level of resources under subprogrammes 2 and 4, and felt that the resources should be more equally distributed among subprogrammes. Some delegations expressed concern about the lower level of resources allocated to subprogramme 2 from the regular budget in relation to the higher level from extrabudgetary resources and underlined, in particular, that insufficient resources had been allocated to implement the goals and objectives of the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/228 of 23 December 1993. Other delegations welcomed the emphasis on subprogramme 1, which had been designated high priority by the Assembly, and expressed the hope that the activities envisaged under subprogramme 4 would draw fully on expertise existing elsewhere, including outside the United Nations system.

5. Many delegations considered that the programme of work regarding the integration of human rights concerns into economic and social development activities was not legislatively mandated. Many delegations expressed the view that the programme had been mandated by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights. 1/

6. Many delegations noted that, despite being emphasized in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the activities regarding the right to development were not adequately reflected in the proposed programme of work and that the right to development should, in accordance with resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, be addressed in a separate subprogramme. In that context, they insisted that programme 35 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised, 2/ should be redrafted to provide an effective programmatic follow-up of the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development as part of the efforts to implement the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. Many other delegations felt that the issue had been adequately addressed under the relevant subprogrammes, in the same manner as other individual human rights, none of which could or should be confined to a single subprogramme.

7. Many delegations felt that the responsibilities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and those of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights were well defined and mutually reinforcing. Some delegations opined that the respective responsibilities and mandates of the two senior officials should be further reviewed and clarified.

8. A number of delegations considered that the ongoing restructuring of the programme and the reorganization of the Centre for Human Rights were useful and effective, and were in line with the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, as reflected in its report (A/49/892, annex). Other delegations felt that those actions were not sufficient and that much remained to be done to increase efficiency and to eliminate any duplication or

overlapping of activities. They further emphasized the need for the expeditious implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights.

9. Many delegations emphasized that the activities in the field of human rights, including the right to development, should be for the well-being of all humankind and that an integrated approach should be developed to guarantee balanced attention to human rights, on the basis of the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity, as set out in paragraph 31 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. They emphasized that the programme narrative did not refer to all the relevant mandates and omitted a number of important issues contained in the Vienna Declaration, in particular in the area of economic and social rights. They stressed that the different proposals and ideas reflected in section 21, particularly in paragraphs 21.2, 21.6, 21.23 and 21.27 (b) and (c), should be redrafted to reflect the mandates, letter and spirit of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

10. Other delegations insisted that the budget proposals correctly sought to implement the whole Vienna Declaration and all other mandates. They disagreed with attempts to pick and choose between mandates and were of the opinion that the budget proposals should therefore be approved in their entirety.

11. Some delegations reiterated their strong support for the establishment of a comprehensive programme in order to help Member States in strengthening the institutions of the rule of law as contained in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and General Assembly resolutions 48/132 of 20 December 1993 and 49/194 of 23 December 1994. Those delegations emphasized that adequate resources should be allocated for the programme.

12. Delegations welcomed the inclusion in the programme of work of the legislative mandates approved since 1992. Several delegations expressed regret that the revisions proposed in 1994 to programme 35 of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 were still under review by the General Assembly and could not provide the framework for section 21.

13. Many delegations supported the proposed conversion of posts, noting that for the most part they did not amount to additional human resources and that the regularization of the posts would have a beneficial impact on morale and efficiency at the Centre for Human Rights. Many other delegations felt that the 21 new posts approved as temporary by the General Assembly in section III of its resolution 49/219 of 23 December 1994 should not be proposed for conversion into established posts until the Advisory Committee on Budgetary Questions had commented further.

14. Many delegations stressed that the resources for the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families should have been redeployed to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights instead of being surrendered. Some delegations expressed concern about the lack of clarity on the resources that should be allocated to the promotion of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/175 of 23 December 1994.

15. Some delegations emphasized the need to improve the coordination of activities in the field of human rights undertaken by different entities of the Organization.

Conclusion and recommendations

16. The Committee was unable to reach agreement on a recommendation to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 21, Human rights. It therefore recommended to the Assembly that, when considering the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997, it review the programme narrative of section 21, paying due attention to the observations in paragraphs 2 to 15 above.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June 1993 (A/CONF.157/24 (part I)), chap. III.

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 6 and corrigendum (A/47/6/Rev.1), vols. I and II.

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4. Several delegations expressed their concern as regards the decline in the level of extrabudgetary resources projected for the biennium 1996-1997. At the same time, they questioned the rationale for the increase in the number of extrabudgetary posts.

Conclusions and recommendations

5. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 22, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

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region. Some delegations looked forward to a broader sharing of the costs of the Agency during the period.

Conclusions and recommendations

4. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 23, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

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Addendum

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 24. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

1. At its 28th meeting, on 6 June 1995, the Committee considered section 24, Department of Humanitarian Affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Many delegations recalled the objectives enshrined in resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 and 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 and expressed the hope that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs would enhance its efforts to meet the purposes for which it had been established.

3. Delegations expressed strong support for the programme on emergency humanitarian assistance, and the importance of providing adequate regular budget resources for its implementation.

4. Many delegations expressed concern with the decline in the level of extrabudgetary resources projected to be available in 1996-1997. They

considered that the Department's activities should be funded on a more secure and predictable basis. Some delegations emphasized the need to secure continuous funding for important activities such as the early warning systems.

5. Some delegations regretted the use of new terms in the programme narrative, such as "humanitarian diplomacy" and "humanitarian advocate". One delegation welcomed the use of new words like "humanitarian diplomacy", which was understood to mean diplomacy in the service of humanitarian assistance. Some delegations regretted the use of the word "intervención" in the Spanish text and requested an accurate translation of the word used in the English and French texts. Some delegations questioned the Department's mandate for demining activities.

6. Some delegations welcomed the inclusion of the "White Helmets" initiative in the activities to be performed in subprogramme 1, Policy planning and development, and its legislative mandate based on General Assembly resolution 49/139 B of 20 December 1994. In that regard, it was mentioned that additional operative guidelines should be established by the Economic and Social Council at its 1995 substantive session (July 1995). Other delegations expressed their concern about the usefulness of the initiative in complex emergency situations.

7. A number of delegations suggested that the respective responsibilities of the New York and Geneva offices should be more clearly defined.

8. Some delegations emphasized the interrelationship between natural disaster reduction and development and stressed that natural disaster reduction strategies should cover the continuum from relief to development.

9. Some delegations stressed the importance of information component in natural disaster preventive measures and requested that information related to natural disaster should be easily accessible for all countries.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 25. Public information

1. At its 24th meeting, on 2 June 1995, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 25, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Several delegations expressed satisfaction with the proposed reductions in the budget of the Department of Public Information. Some delegations stressed that further reductions could have been achieved through greater economy measures and improved productivity. Many delegations stated that budget reductions should not be seen as an end in themselves and emphasized concern that such reductions could have a negative impact on the programme of work of the Department. They sought clear assurances from the Secretariat in that regard.

3. Many delegations stressed the need for adequate resources to be allocated to provide backstopping for public information activities of peace-keeping missions and made reference to the recommendations contained in the evaluation report on peace-keeping operations (E/AC.51/1995/2). They expressed concern that no separate unit, either in the Department of Public Information or the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, had been identified to provide such support. Many other delegations emphasized their support for the Secretary-General's decision to assign responsibility for the information component of the peace-keeping operations to the Department of Public Information. One delegation emphasized that any increase for that purpose should be achieved through internal redeployment of resources.

4. Several delegations emphasized the importance of the role of information in raising public awareness of issues facing the Organization and its members. Many delegations suggested that while a significant level of resources were assigned to cover issues of peace and security, more emphasis should be placed on coverage of economic and social concerns, including issues of debt, trade and poverty, and urged the Department to strive for a balance between activities relating to peace-keeping and those relating to development. Other delegations felt that insufficient resources were being devoted to information on peace and security-related activities given their impact on public perceptions of the Organization.

5. Several delegations emphasized the importance of the work of the United Nations information centres and services in promoting a greater understanding of the issues facing the Organization and of its activities. Several delegations queried the growth proposed in the resources of the Information Service at Geneva and emphasized the importance of a clearer division of responsibility between the Information Services at Geneva and Vienna.

6. Many delegations commended the Department on its efforts in utilizing electronic media as an efficient and cost-effective method of implementing its work programme and felt that greater economies could be achieved through a greater concentration on such electronic media. Many other delegations emphasized the importance of responding to the needs of developing countries in that context, since access to such media was relatively limited. They stressed the importance of giving continuing attention to radio and print media.

7. Some delegations emphasized the need for a periodic review of the Department's publications programme with a view to identifying obsolete publications. Some other delegations stressed that any revision to the mandated programme of work of the Department would have to be endorsed by the General Assembly.

8. Many delegations emphasized the importance of achieving parity in the production of outputs in the working languages of the Organization and emphasized the importance of the use of all United Nations languages. Some delegations stressed that, to reach as large an audience as possible, more items and material should be produced, as far as possible, in local languages.

Conclusions and recommendations

9. The Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it approve the programme narrative of section 25, Public information, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.